

~~House~~ Crane House

last quarter 19th century

Chestertown

private

A shingle style Victorian gothic residence with a mysterious origin, the Crane house appears to have replaced a conventional small scale gabled frame house of which the only record is a partial glimpse in a photograph in Fred Ustilton's Chestertown: Gem City on the Chester and the documentary information that it was built for Richard Smyth. The Crane house itself is a handsome representative of its style, its exterior recently restored by its ~~xxxxx~~ owner.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MHT #  
1503262604

K-326

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Crane House

KTS

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

11 1/4 Water Street

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Kent

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

— DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
— STRUCTURE  
— SITE  
— OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

— PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
— BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
— IN PROCESS  
— BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED  
— UNOCCUPIED  
— WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
— YES RESTRICTED  
— YES UNRESTRICTED  
— NO

**PRESENT USE**

— AGRICULTURE  
— COMMERCIAL  
— EDUCATIONAL  
— ENTERTAINMENT  
— GOVERNMENT  
— INDUSTRIAL  
— MILITARY  
— MUSEUM  
— PARK  
☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
— RELIGIOUS  
— SCIENTIFIC  
— TRANSPORTATION  
☒ OTHER apts

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

John Monroe and Jean Kratzer Hudson

Telephone #: 778-1688

STREET & NUMBER

117 Water Street

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21620

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Office of the County Clerk

Liber #: EHP 37

Folio #: 417

STREET & NUMBER

Kent County Court House

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

none

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

K-326

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED ??	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

111 1/2 Water Street is located on the northwest side of the street, one door south of the intersection of Maple Avenue and Water Street in Chestertown; it is on a part of the southwest half Town Lot 15.

It is a 2 1/2-story 4-bay frame shingle-covered Victorian house with a 3-bay gable end facing the street, a 1-bay, 3-story octagonal tower in the fourth (right) bay, and a 1-story flat roof porch across the front of the gable end and abutting the tower.

The main wing of the house, though only two bays deep, is approximately square; there are several wings telescoped to the rear.

The house sits on a low brick basement. The porch sits on brick piers and is enclosed to a height of some three feet with shingles. There are four plain round columns across the front of the porch supporting a plain box cornice and slightly tapered tin roof. The steps are wood. The door is in the right bay and has one large pane of glass in its upper half and four panels below.

There are two double hung sash windows on each of the two main stories and all are 1/1 with louvered shutters. There is a pair of 6/1 attic windows in the middle of the front gable. The plain cornice has a very deep soffit. There is a 3-foot return across the front of the gable on each side and a fascia board running across the front of the house at the same level continuing the line established by the cornice return and thereby completing the outlining of the gable.

The roof is covered with composition shingles.

The tower has 1/1 double hung sash windows on each of its exposed sides on the first and second stories, 6/1 windows on the third story. There are no shutters on the tower. The octagonal-cone roof is covered with the same cedar shingles that are on the main building, and it has a pinnacle at its peak.

There are large gabled dormers with paired windows on the north and south elevations of the main wing, which have triangular pediments and single pilasters between the window pairs.

The north elevation has a bay window about halfway up the facade between the first and second stories, opposite the stair-landing within.

There are two additional "A" roof 2 1/2-story wings to the rear, both with an assortment of pedimented dormers; and there is a full-width single story shed-roofed addition beyond them. There is a chimney in the first of the additional wings and another at the rear of the second.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## PERIOD

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Last quarter 19th century BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

114 Water Street is interesting as a suggestion of the late nineteenth century shingle style Victorian houses or simply as a shingled ~~place of~~ restrained Victorian Gothic, but its principal interest has to do with the nineteenth century history of houses and transfers on the northern end of Water Street, and a small mystery which surrounds its date of construction.

The house is built on a piece of the southern half of Town Lot 15. The whole moiety came into the nineteenth century as the property of Simon Wickes' descendants: Wickes is presumably buried in the northwest corner of the whole moiety, somewhere at the rear of what it today 112 Water Street. The Wickes sold the whole moiety to Dr. George Washington Thomas in 1826 for \$300. From Thomas it passed into the Perkins family. Then in 1863 George W.T. Perkins sold it to Richard Smyth for \$475, and this is where the mystery begins. We know there was a house on the land by 1872 and that it was Smyth's, by information in his will of that date and from the 1877 map of Chestertown which shows a house on the land with Smyth's name on it. But there is a good deal of doubt as to whether it was the present house or not. The shape of the house on the map ~~and on the 1893 Sanborn Insurance Map~~ does not conform to the present house's shape at all. Further there are two photographs in Fred Usilton's Chestertown: Gem City on the Chester which show a house on what appears to be this piece of ground which is clearly not the present house: they show a house with its gable ends perpendicular to the street and with at least two gabled dormers facing the street.

It appears fairly likely that sometime between the 1870's and the turn of the present century the Smyth house (willed to his daughter, Mary Diehl in the 1872 will) burned or was demolished (the Sanborn Insurance Map shows the Smyth house was frame), and was replaced by the present structure. A thorough remodeling is, of course, possible, but it would have had to have been radical indeed.

Around the turn of the century, there was a dispute among the Diehls, and the property--still all of the moiety--was sold off by Lewin W. Wickes as Trustee to Eben F. Perkins. Perkins then split the property, selling the half of the moiety with the house on it to Curtis E. Crane in 1902. (The other half, bordering Town Lot 14, went to Beulah Perkins, who later bought an adjoining piece of 14 to make up what is today essentially the 112 Water Street property.) The Cranes are the earliest owners of 114 Water Street anyone can remember--and the present house is the only house anyone living can ever remember having been on the property.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Part of Town Lot 15. Beginning on Front Street at the point where this lot adjoins the lands formerly of William J. Vannort (Metcalfe Apts) and at the corner of the house now standing on this lot, and running back at right angles with Front Street and with the lands formerly of William J. Vannort, about 187 feet, 6 inches, to Laura T. Lambert's lot; thence at right angles and with said Laura T. Lambert's lot 41 feet, 6 inches to the lot of Eben F. Perkins (112 Water) thence at right angles and with said lot 187 feet, 6 inches more or less to Front Street, and thence by and with Front Street 41 feet, 6 inches to the place of beginning.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Robert Neill Historic Site Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Maryland Historical Trust / Town of Chestertown

May, 1976

STREET &amp; NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

Summary of Title Search:  
111 Water Street

Heirs of Simon Wickes to Dr. George Washington Thomas TW 4 787 (1826) \$300

George W. Thomas to George W.T. Perkins

George W.T. Perkins to Richard Smyth JKN 3 433 (1863) \$475

Richard Smyth wills property to his daughter, Mary Diehl Wills EC 1 234 (1872)

Lewin W. Wickes, trustee for the Diehls to Eben F. Perkins JTD 4 514 (1901) \$2850

Eben F. Perkins to Curtis E. Crane JTD 6 399 (1902)

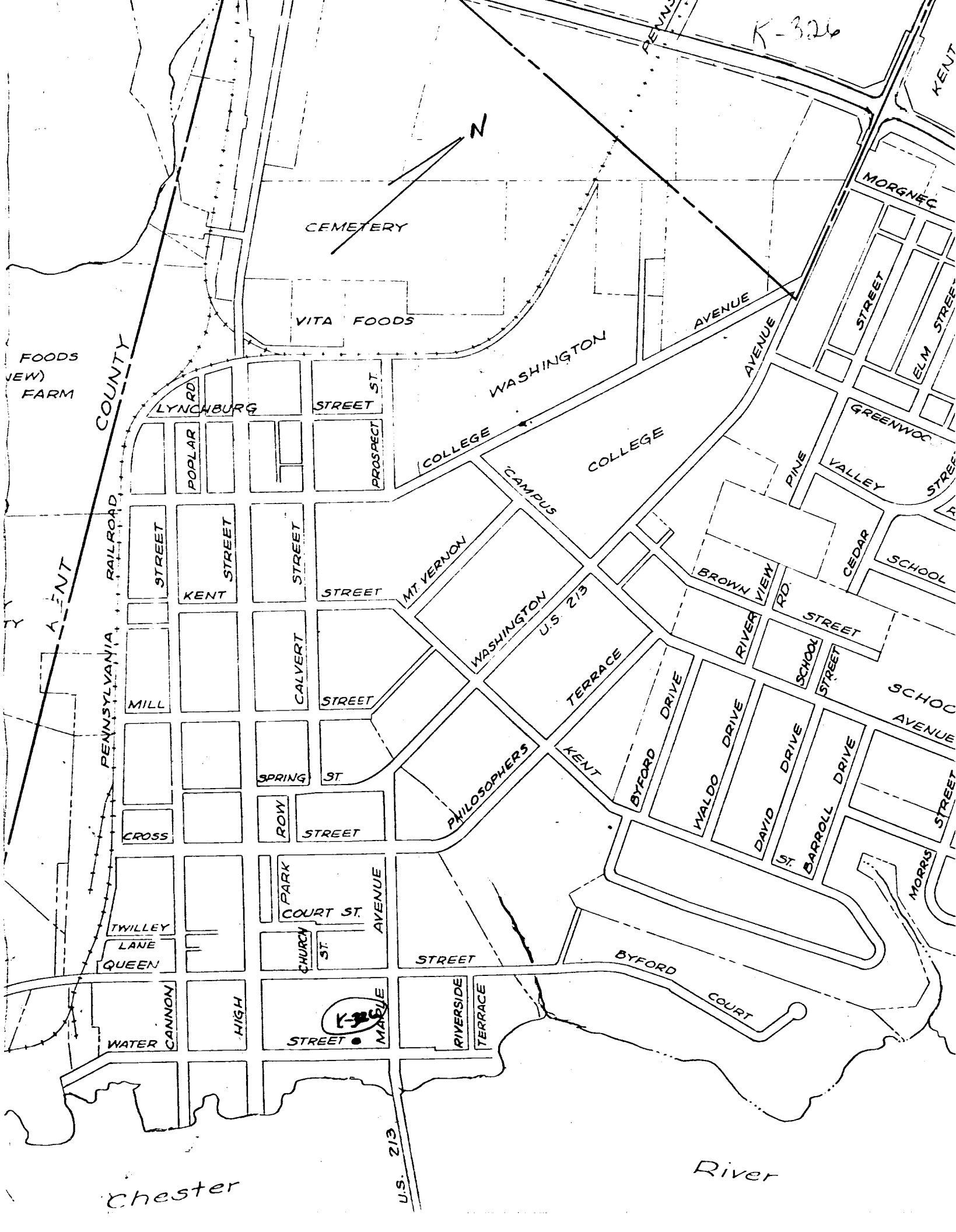
Louise Crane Withgott to Mary S. Fontaine PRA 10 261 (1927)

(Mary Fontaine died, property vested in E. Clarke Fontaine who then married  
Elba Withgott) ~~xxx~~

E. Clarke Fontaine and Elba Withgott Fontaine to Mary M. Beck WHG 7 302 (1948)  
for

Marie C. Selby, trustee ~~xx~~ Mary M. Beck's estate to Jack and Miriam Kieffer  
WHG 36 574 (1954)

Jack and Miriam Kieffer to John and Jean Hudson EHP 37 417



K-326

N

CEMETERY

VITA FOODS

FOODS  
(NEW)  
FARM

KENT COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

LYNCHBURG

POPLAR RD

STREET

STREET

STREET

KENT

STREET

MT VERNON

WASHINGTON

U.S. 213

TERRACE

PHILOSOPHERS

KENT

BYFORD DRIVE

WALDO DRIVE

DAVID DRIVE

BARROLL DRIVE

SCHOC AVENUE

STREET

MORRIS

CROSS

SPRING ST

STREET

ROW

PARK COURT ST

CHURCH ST

AVENUE

STREET

BYFORD COURT

RIVERSIDE TERRACE

STREET

K-326

TWILLEY LANE QUEEN

WATER CANNON

HIGH

Chester

U.S. 213

River



200 WATER (also 103 m)  
Pearce Hse.





K 326 Crane Hornet

114 Water

1/77 E



K-326 Crane House, 114 Water St.

1/77 N & E View